

Extension history

Electric cooperatives come to rural Minnesota

President Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture left it up to individual groups to organize. On their own, local groups asked Extension for help. Two months after REA went into effect, Meeker County Extension agent Ralph Wayne and former agent Frank Marshall organized the first rural electric cooperative in Minnesota. This two-year work in progress became the first demonstration site in the nation.

In 1940, Extension sponsored nine farm and home equipment shows across the state showing how electricity could be used in operating farms and modernizing rural homes.

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